

WASHINGTON.

GENERAL WASHINGTON DESPATCHES.

WASHINGTON, May 13, 1877.

ADMITTED TO THE POSTAL UNION—RATES OF POSTAGE ESTABLISHED.

The Empire of Japan has been admitted to the Postal Union from and after June 1, and Brazil and the Portuguese colonies from July 1, 1877. The postage rates fixed by the United States for prepaid correspondence addressed to and unpaid correspondence received from Japan, when the transportation is performed by direct steamers between San Francisco and Yokohama, are as follows:—

For prepaid letters, 3 cents per 15 grammes, $\frac{1}{2}$ oz.; for unpaid letters received, 10 cents per 15 grammes, $\frac{1}{2}$ oz.; for postal cards, 2 cents each; for newspapers, if not over 4 oz. in weight, 2 cents each; for books, other printed matter, stationery, etc., 4 cents for each weight of one ounce or fraction thereof; for registration fee on all correspondence, 10 cents.

The rates applicable to Brazil and the Portuguese colonies, and to Japan, when correspondence is forwarded via Europe, are as follows:—

For prepaid letters, 10 cents per 15 grammes, $\frac{1}{2}$ oz.; for unpaid letters received, 15 cents per 15 grammes, $\frac{1}{2}$ oz.; for postal cards, 4 cents each; for books, other printed matter, stationery, etc., 4 cents for each weight of one ounce or fraction thereof; for registration fee on all correspondence, 10 cents.

FRED DOUGLASS' BALTIMORE LECTURE.

All the Sunday papers contain articles severely condemnatory of the recent lecture delivered in Baltimore by Frederick Douglass, which reflected on the citizens of Washington. Columbus Alexander, democrat, who is one of the townsmen of Maryland, will so continue, as he considers the explanation of Mr. Douglass, published yesterday, satisfactory.

MOVEMENTS OF AMERICAN DIPLOMATS.

Mr. Baker, Minister to Russia, will return to St. Petersburg before the latter part of this month, which will be before his leave of absence shall have expired. No time is yet named for the departure of Minister Kasson to Spain and Minister Noyes to France.

There is no prospect of the immediate appointment of other Ministers, but there will soon be changes in consulates.

BIDS OPENED AT THE POST OFFICE DEPARTMENT.

Bids for supplying the Post Office Department with postal cards for the next four years are to be opened at the department on Wednesday next, and there is likely to be a very lively competition among the different manufacturers. This is the second time proposals have been invited, the first bids having been thrown out on the representation of the other manufacturers that the style called for, known as three-plies, having faces and backs of different colors could only be made by two or three manufacturers, and, therefore, amounted practically to a monopoly.

In order that justice may be done to all, bids and specimens will be received from both classes of manufacturers, and whichever is considered the best suited to the interests of the government will be selected.

CIRCULATING WITHOUT AUTHORITY.

When, in 1853, the inland postage of the United States was reduced to three cents, Congress provided by law for the issue of the small three-cent coins as an accompaniment to the new postage stamps, but in subsequent legislation no provision was made for the coinage of the three-cent pieces, and in the revision of the laws the statute providing for the three-cent coins is wholly omitted, so there is found in circulation at this time this little coin without any apparent legal authority for its existence.

THE PRESIDENT'S VISIT.

WASHINGTON, May 13, 1877.

THE DEPARTURE FROM WASHINGTON AND ARRIVAL IN NEW YORK—PROGRAMME OF MOVEMENTS WHILE IN THE METROPOLIS.

WASHINGTON, May 13, 1877.

President Hayes, Secretaries Evans and Seward, and General Sherman, leave in the morning for New York by the limited express train, and will be due at the foot of Desbrosses street about four o'clock in the afternoon. Secretary Sherman is detained by business affairs and will probably not leave Washington until tomorrow evening.

MOVEMENTS OF THE PARTY.

The President's party will dine with the Chamber of Commerce at seven o'clock, and will remain over Tuesday to see the carnival procession and succeeding festivities, and will return to Washington on Wednesday. Secretary Seward, who is an honorary member of the Chamber of Commerce, will avail himself of the opportunity of his presence in New York to see the Indian goods depot in Walker street, to return himself on the subject of the annual fair, and where he now under consideration by the Interior Department.

The carnival will attract a good many spectators from this vicinity, and both the competing railroad lines are selling excursion tickets to New York and return for the three days ending Wednesday night.

ALMOST A FIRE PANIC.

WASHINGTON, May 13, 1877.

THE APPALLING CRY HEARD AT A TEMPERANCE MEETING—A CATASTROPHE HAPPILY AVOIDED—ALBERT FOR THE CRIME OF AEBSON.

WASHINGTON, May 13, 1877.

A great temperance revival is now in progress here, and the Grand Opera House was packed with about two thousand persons at a temperance meeting, at about half-past four o'clock this afternoon. Suddenly a villain set fire to some cones matting in the aisle, which immediately sent a volume of smoke among the audience, when a terrible scene ensued.

A general rush was made for the door amid the appalling cry of fire, but owing to the courage of the persons conducting the meeting, who directed a hymn to be sung, the audience calmly waited until the smoke cleared away, and then the fire was put out.

There were several slight injuries, but nothing serious.

A man named William Baird had been arrested for the crime—arson—which is a capital felony here. True name was tried and narrowly escaped conviction for a like offence about fifteen years ago.

THE DEVOURING ELEMENT.

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SOUTH CAROLINA.

THE QUESTION OF PAYING THE INTEREST ON THE STATE DEBT—DIVIDED COUNCILS AMONG LEGISLATORS—ADVOCATE OF REPUDIATION OR POSTPONEMENT—FEELING IN MERCANTILE CIRCLES.

CHARLESTON, May 13, 1877.

POLITICAL ISSUES IN SOUTH CAROLINA ARE BECOMING SHADOWED BY FINANCIAL QUESTIONS.

Political issues in South Carolina are becoming shadowed by financial questions. The stringent law which the granger element in the Legislature has been advocating has been started off until the regular session, but the fight over the State debt this week promises to be hot and very doubtful as to the result. The mercantile interest of Charleston is using all its influence to uphold the honor and credit of the State by securing a faithful observance of the terms of the adjustment of the public debt solemnly executed three years ago, and Governor Hampton is steadily exerting his great personal influence in the same direction and has been so far successful as to have prevailed upon the Committee of Ways and Means to insert clauses in the Appropriation and Tax bills reported last week, providing for the payment of the interest on the debt, and proposed tax for this purpose will encounter a fierce opposition in the Legislature.

THE GRANGER ELEMENT.

The democratic majority in that body is largely composed of farmers without experience in public affairs, and with but one idea as to their duty as legislators, and that is to protect the rights of the cultivators of the soil. The granger element, on the other hand, is composed of farmers with experience in public affairs, and with but one idea as to their duty as legislators, and that is to protect the rights of the cultivators of the soil.

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